Crumbling Forts

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Crumbling Forts

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Summary

Continuation of this AU fic in which Will and Hannibal have a one night stand before the start of canon. Will meets Hannibal again in Apéritif and is not pleased.

Notes

Thank you to everyone who encouraged me to continue this thing. This is for you!

See the end of the work for more notes

“Tell me then, how many confessions?” asks Hannibal as he peruses the case board by Jack’s desk, his back to Will, hands casually tucked into the pockets of his jacket. God, Will’s already calling him *Hannibal* in his head. Will allows himself a single glance at the line of Hannibal’s back before snatching his eyes away.

He stares into the space in front of him instead, takes in the reusable water bottle on Jack’s desk, the cup full of writing utensils, the ‘PROCESSED’ stamp with a violent red blotch staining the white label.

Jack answers the question in a rambling way, and Will’s reaction to the mention of Tattlecrime.com slips out of his mouth reflexively, a contemptuous “Tasteless,” muttered under his breath.

“You have trouble with taste?” comes Hannibal’s question, mildly curious. Polite and not at all presumptuous, damn him. Will doesn’t move his eyes, but he can tell that Hannibal’s attention is still on the board.

“My thoughts are often not *tasty*,” he says, his voice slightly louder this time, and then is instantly reminded of the man’s tongue against his, sliding hot and wet, and he wonders if Hannibal is thinking of it too, is thinking of how he spread Will’s legs open, hands hard on Will’s thighs, and—

When the answer comes, it’s perfectly bland. “Nor mine. No effective barriers.”

“I build forts,” Will says, diverting himself from the dangerous images floating in his head with a sip of too-hot coffee. The coffee burns the roof of his mouth, but he swallows it down anyway.

“Associations come quickly,” Hannibal says, still in that practical manner of his, and he’s drawing nearer, seating himself beside Will in the next chair—and Will’s back to that night again, the smell of bourbon and wine assaulting his senses, blotting out the taste of the coffee; he can almost feel the smooth surface of the bar underneath his palms.

“So do forts,” he asserts, glances up at Hannibal’s impassive face then quickly away again. He builds a fort now, in his mind, around anything that would give Hannibal the power to further disrupt his calm.

It’s a hasty construction, the bricks uneven and the quality suspect—the best he can do on such short notice. “Not fond of eye contact, are you?” asks Hannibal. Will hears rather than sees him pick up his own coffee mug, listens to the careful sip he takes before setting it back down. No scalded tongue for him.

Will heaves a sigh, the cracks in his fort enlarging just enough to afford him a view of Hannibal’s eyes, glowing amber in the golden light of his hotel room. *Shit*.

“Eyes are distracting,” he begins, and then rambles something incoherent about why he really can’t be bothered to look anyone in the eyes. Especially not the stranger he fucked one

weekend a month ago who was supposed to *remain* a stranger. He very pointedly does not meet Hannibal's eyes, and it's probably rude, but Will is settling for rude rather than risking a fucking hard-on in the middle of Jack's office at Quantico.

His efforts aren't completely successful; he makes the mistake of turning to face Hannibal, at least, and Hannibal's lips curve into an amused smile that somehow manages to elicit a tiny thread of triumph from within Will.

That's not good. "Jack—" Will calls out, feeling cornered and wanting to be rescued, but he doesn't have any explanation for why he says Jack's name, and he hopes Jack doesn't think to ask. He flips over a page of his notes, glancing down at it, vaguely panicked.

Hannibal's speaking again. He's unrelenting. "I imagine what you see and learn touches everything else in your mind. Your values and decency are present yet shocked at your associations, appalled at your dreams—"

Will finds he's looking. Can't seem to look away. Eyes caught at last. Hannibal's voice is almost a caress, and the *words* he's saying—Will wonders if he's the only one who finds them obscene, considering the…associations. "—No forts in the bone arena of your skull for things you love."

Hannibal's words float for a moment before settling, and when Will is no longer distracted by the slow seduction of those words, whether intended or not—and it can't be, can it, Hannibal doesn't seem to be affected at all by this—Will's eyebrows draw together, a suspicion forming.

"Whose profile are you you working on?" he asks sharply. He turns to Jack, repeats the question more aggressively, getting comfortable now with the bite of anger this breach of courtesy affords him. "Whose profile is he working on?"

"I'm sorry, Will," interrupts Hannibal, though it's clear Jack isn't going to say anything on the matter anyway from the look of feigned innocence on his face as he stares back at Will, and Will tries not to wince visibly at the sound of his name on Hannibal's lips. "Observing is what we do. I can't shut mine off any more than you can shut yours off."

"Please," Will says, and then almost chokes on the word when Hannibal's movements abruptly cease in the act of pulling his coffee cup to his lips again. Will can hear a soft indrawn breath, and another piece of the fort comes crumbling away. His face grows immediately hot.

'*How nice that word sounds on your lips*.' Oh god.

"Don't psychoanalyze me," he continues, voice trembling only slightly, and maybe he can pass it off as anger, because that's certainly present as well. He doesn't dare to look at Hannibal now, lest he see how badly he's failed. "You won't like me when I'm psychoanalyzed."

"Will—" Jack begins to intervene, now that Will's passed into truly uncivil territory.

But Will is already beating a hasty retreat. “Now if you’ll excuse me,” he says, standing, still resolutely avoiding even a glance at Hannibal’s face, his tone defiant, bordering on irony, “I have to go give a lecture—on psychoanalyzing.” His next class isn’t for another hour, but if Jack knows this and recognizes it as a ruse to get away from the situation, he doesn’t say anything.

Hannibal doesn’t say anything either. Will makes it safely out the door.

In the elevator, he leans his head against the brushed steel of the elevator wall and breathes through his mouth for a few seconds. Then he straightens. Shrugs off the discomfort of the encounter.

Well. Now he knows the name of the man he’s been using as inspiration for late-night fantasies for the past month. *Doctor Hannibal Lecter.* It might’ve gone better, but at least his rudeness will ensure that Hannibal Lecter won’t want anything to do with him after this. That’s fine with Will. He doesn’t need more complication in his life. Doesn’t need someone capable of reaching into his mind *and* his body with such perfect proficiency.

He probably won’t see him again, but at least he can still keep the late-night fantasies.

He allows himself to repeat the man’s name: “Hannibal Lecter,” said softly, the syllables rolling pleasantly off his tongue.

End Notes

Kudos are much-appreciated but comments will be snogged!

Also here is a link to the tumblr post, in case you feel like reblogging (reblogs are also lovely and appreciated)!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!